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Subject: Libyan Coup

1. The following transcript of McCloskey news briefing September 2 on the Libyan situation is transmitted for post's information:

QTE Q Bob, have we heard anything from Libya? They supposedly informed Britain they would honor all treaties and commitments. Have we heard anything from them at all like that?

A. Let me just give you what I have on Libya. And I have a fact sheet which I'll post for you on background data.

But the general situation -- we are in touch with our Embassy offices in three places: Tripoli, Benghazi and Baida (spelled). With one exception, we know of no incidents involving injuries or threat to the safety of Americans.

There was one American citizen, employee of a private U.S.

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company, who reportedly received a flesh wound in his left arm from a bullet apparently fired by an excited street guard, I'm informed. No other Americans injured. American properties have not been damaged.

Q. Do you know the name of this man?

A. I have the man's name, but I don't have any locale or other identification.

Q. Bob, could you give us the name?

A. Well, the name, as I have it, is Richard Voss.

Q. Voss?

A. Yes.

Q. Do you have the company?

Q. Do you know where he is from, Bob?

A. No, that's why I didn't want to use the man's name. I don't have any --

Q. You don't even know what city he's from?

A. -- backup data. No, I just said I don't have any additional information on it!

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Q. Do you have the city where he was wounded?

A. No. I'll get that. All Libyan air and seaports have been closed. However, oil loading continues and a spokesman for the Revolutionary Command Council said the decision to keep the oil ports closed would be reviewed in a few days. In the meantime, all oil production continues uninterrupted.

Q. Did he say that to our Charge or to whom?

A. Now, wait, I'm not sure that I can answer that specifically. But I do -- let me go on first.

Now, the Embassy has had several contacts with spokesmen for the Revolutionary Command Council, but we must say that the membership of the Council is still unknown to us. The spokesmen for the Council did assure our Charge -- and that is James Blake -- and also his opposite numbers of France, Great Britain and the USSR, that the coup was an internal matter and not directed against any foreign country.

He further stated -- that is, the spokesman for the Command Council -- that the army will respect all agreements and treaties and observe

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the rights of the petroleum companies.

The U.S. Government will continue to follow developments closely.

Q. Did the closing of airports include Wheelus Field, and have we stopped flying in and out?

A. Yes. I suppose that does include Wheelus. All Libyan air and sea ports have been closed.

Q. And the lease on Wheelus runs out in 1971, is that correct?

A. The agreement authorizing the U.S. to continue the use of the facilities at Wheelus --/this is a reference of history -- was concluded in 1954 and under its terms can be reviewed in December 1970.

Now, there were discussions on the future of the base between the two governments in 1964 and in 1967. The specific question of the status of Wheelus has not been raised by the Revolutionary Command Council.

Q. Well, under that '54 agreement, does it just sort of go on indefinitely, subject to this review?

A. Review, yes. In other words, it would continue without anything necessarily being done until December 1970.

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However -- and I think we made announcements on this--there were discussions between the two governments, both in 1964 and in 1967. And I'm not sure that any conclusions have been reached as a result of those discussions.

Q. Can you say in '67 at the time of those discussions, after the six-day war, didn't the US say it was prepared to give up its lease on Wheelus? I think there were --

A. FOR BACKGROUND, that's generally correct, yes. I think that the discussions were pointed in that direction.

Q. Give it up when?

A. Well, see, now, there I don't know that any specific date has been either suggested or negotiated.

Q. Is it an active base, Bob, now? And how many people do we have in and around there, do you know?

A. Well, it is an active base in the sense that there is a training program administered by the U.S. for Libyans at Wheelus.

Additionally, U.S. air units in Europe conduct their own training at Wheelus. One of the things I've been told is that there is

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target practice conducted at Wheelus by American Air Force units from Europe.

I don't have a figure on exactly how many Americans there are at Wheelus. Wait, I do. I'm sorry. On U.S. citizens and dependents in Libya, U.S. Government employees and dependents, 112; DOD employees and dependents -- that is Department of Defense -- 414.

Q. Is Defense part of the U.S. Government?

A. I think we're talking about civilian, Embassy, other non-military Government employees and dependents.

Then at Wheelus, military and dependents, 4,278.

Q. Once again, how much?

A. 4,278. Then lastly, residents, American residents and tourists, approximately 4400. I think I'd prefer to round these figures out. I'm always a little put off by specific figures. We'll make a total of approximately 9,200 Americans of those various categories that I've outlined for you in all of Libya. And I think that'll probably serve both of us better.

Q. Does that separated DOD figure from the Wheelus figure

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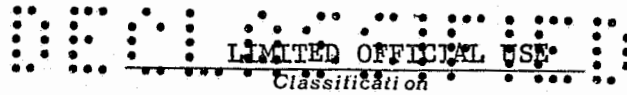
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indicate a military aid mission, or what's going on there that the military has got people for other than Wheelus?

A. Well, I don't know the answer to that. Does anybody here know? It doesn't only involve Wheelus.

I think this is probably the explanation. There is a MAAG. And when I referred to it a few minutes ago, I put it at Wheelus. But I think probably what is meant here is that you've got DOD people in Libya as a result of the MAAG, some of whom may not be only at Wheelus.

Q. What is MAAG?

A. Military Advisory Assistance Group I think is the designation.

Q. Bob, if you're correct --

Q. Let's go back to the '67 conversation which was quite active at the time. What happened to it? Was it called off by mutual agreement, suspended, or what happened?

A. Well, let me go ON BACKGROUND here. As I recollect, it was announced that both governments had agreed to begin discussions at that time on the future of Wheelus, looking beyond December 1970. And

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again ON BACKGROUND, I'm rather confident that we indicated a willingness to give up Wheelus sometime after December 1970.

But those discussions, going into them in '67, did not have a terminal date on them and were left to the mutual agreement of both sides to pick them up whenever they felt it appropriate.

So it was, you know, a somewhat informal arrangement that did not tie the two sides to a specific outcome on a precise date.

Q. Bob, if you're correct, that is, Wheelus has been closed down as all other airports and seaports in Libya, that obviously would interfere with our NATO training and target programs and with our military operations, because we do have some permanent F-4 units there, I believe, and some MAC units. Are we making any representations to the new government to let us continue using Wheelus, and has this been announced?

A. That hasn't occurred yet. And I wouldn't want to -- I think it would be unfair to, you know -- draw too large a picture today, in view of something that just happened in the last, what, 48 hours. So things will be uncertain for several days, I'm sure, and ~~perhaps~~

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hopefully will be clarified.

Q. Is Libya getting any U.S. aid?

A. Wait a minute.

Q. I'm sorry.

A. I have to go back here. I have just been given a note.

Wheelus is not closed.

Q. Oh.

A. And the DOD figure that I gave you -- employees and dependents -- are civilians at Wheelus.

Q. Oh.

A. So you've got DOD employees and dependents. I gave you a figure of 414. Then you have got Wheelus military and dependents, 4,278.

Q. Does that mean there isn't a MAAG?

A. No. There is a MAAG.

O. But it's at Wheelus then, presumably, or listed at Wheelus?

A. Yes, I suppose so. That's correct.

Q. Bob, do we have an aid program, and what happens to it now in

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the interim?

A. Well, there is no aid program at present on the economic side. There is, on the military side, a small assistance program which mainly is the training of Libyan army and air force. That's all there is.

Q. What is the status technically of our relations with the new government at this time? It's automatically suspended, I assume?

A. Well, I think if the question is on recognition, I think we have to say it would be premature to comment on that at this point.

Q. Bob, do you remember when the discussions in '67 were concluded, specifically whether they were concluded prior to the Arab-Israeli war?

Q. Well, they were all after that.

Q. They began afterwards.

Q. As a result of it.

Q. Did they?

. A. I don't know the date, ~~but~~ but the comment I just heard is correct.

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Q. Bob, has our Charge --

A. I don't know the date.

Q. Excuse me. Has our Charge heard anything about the Revolutionary Council, or whatever you call it, setting up a socialist government?

A. I don't know. That has been a public statement, I know. And, I can't confirm that that, in fact, was said to our Charge, who apparently was summoned in along with the Charges of the other three governments I mentioned.

Q. Bob, who is our Ambassador to Libya, and where is he?

A. Well, he is Joseph Palmer and he had not been scheduled to arrive there for another several weeks. He was sworn in as the new Ambassador just, I think, in the last ten days.

Q. Bob, do you have a list of the oil companies in Libya, and can you tell us how much oil comes from Libya into the United States annually?

A. No. I'll have to get that. Apparently there are something on the order of 38 U.S. parent oil companies in Libya. There is an

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approximate total of one billion U.S. dollars in U.S. investment.
And I would guess that's preponderantly oil. We'll have to get --
we can get the identification of the countries, I'm sorry, of the
Companies. UNQTE

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